

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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**“No Bullying” campaigns don’t always work**

Dear Editor,

I find that although there are a lot of “No Bullying” campaigns, especially online, it still happens. Although most people participating in bullying aren’t aware that they are hurting someone else. What starts out as some innocent fun taunting each other on Facebook or Twitter can easily become damaging to someone. It’s hard because there is a fine line between a funny comment and a mean comment. Also, on Facebook and Twitter, people can’t tell if someone is being sarcastic or not.

Mehvish Ilyas, senior

**NBA playoffs affected by player injury**

Dear Editor,

The NBA playoffs are in full swing now and a few interesting headlines have popped up. First, it’s interesting to see how the competitive advantages of each team are affected by injury. For example, after Chicago lost Derrick Rose to a torn ACL, they have lost three straight games and sit on the verge of an elimination. There is no “I” in team, but the Bulls have a thorn in their side without Rose. Secondly, the playoff system if playing a series of seven games takes away a lot of pressure of the playoffs. In the NFL, the playoffs operate under a win-or-go-home system. If the NBA used this system, I think we would see an increase in the intensity of the playoffs. Plus, the length of the playoffs is rather taxing, and forces you to watch a lot of game.

Kaushik Chagarlamudi, senior

**Economy not the only factor in upcoming election**

Dear Editor,

The economy is not the only thing that should matter in the upcoming election. Social issues have taken the backburner in recent years, and it’s time for them to come forward. Certain people, if elected would make strides to remove the rights of minorities. This is un-American (movement in America have always dealt with expanding rights) and unacceptable. People have to realize that they have the power to stop this from happening. They need to become more interested in the rights of those who can’t change the course of their own future. They need to demand more from their leaders. So, while the economy is certainly important, it’s not the only thing that should be on the minds of voters as they had to the polls. I simply ask people to vote wisely.

Sonny Ramos, senior

**Creationism controversy inches north towards Mason science classrooms**

Nearby states vote to include Creationism in science curriculum

Branden Labarowski | Staff Writer

On April 10, 2012, Tennessee passed the Teacher Protection Academic Freedom Act, according to *The Star Press*. The act has attracted a flurry of media attention as potential means for teachers to introduce Creationism into the classroom.

According to Public Radio International, the law permits teachers to help students “understand, analyze, critique and review in an objective manner the scientific strengths and scientific weaknesses of existing scientific theories.” Biology teacher David Broxterman said that the law’s intention—to assess the validity of scientific theories—is good.

“It’s a good thing...for students to see firsthand what kind of evidence is out there for existing theories,” Broxterman said.

Broxterman, however, said that the law’s effectiveness will depend on how it is interpreted in the classroom. Broxterman said that although he supports the act’s intent, he believes that Creationism, as a religious idea that isn’t testable by the Scientific Method, does not have a place in the science curriculum and would be better suited to another class.

“I would say Creationism would maybe be more of under a theological study, and wouldn’t really be appropriate for a science class,” Broxterman said.

Senior Sahir Rama said he was also concerned about the law’s religious implications, as focusing on the Christian concept of creation would violate separation of church and state.

“They’re teaching a Christian belief in a public school, which is a violation of the First Amendment,” Rama said.

According to Broxterman, each state’s Science curriculum is determined by its Department of Education, and Ohio’s curriculum emphasizes evolution “as one of the main scientific theories.” Biology teacher Deirdra Ware said that although the current curriculum gives a good deal of focus to evolution’s validity as a scientific theory, its drawbacks and weaknesses are not as thoroughly discussed.

“In our current curriculum...there is a great amount

of focus on the strengths...of the theory, but I can’t say that equal amount of energy and effort is being spent on [its] flaws or issues,” Ware said.

Broxterman said that the scarcity of DNA and fossil evidence left over from Earth’s early years is one reason why some people are inclined not to believe in evolution. However, Broxterman said that one of the biggest reasons for doubt of evolution is religious conviction, which does not always line up with what the scientific community believes.

“One of the main foundations of evolution is that there is a common ancestor for all organisms,” Broxterman said. “I think that challenges some of the religious views, [like the idea] that certain animals were created separately and did not evolve from previous living things.”

Senior William Osler said he believes that there is enough evidence for Creationism to be discussed as a theory in the classroom, as long as it is discussed alongside evolution and both theories’ strengths and weaknesses are addressed.

“There’s a good proportion of evidence that you could use to claim that Creationism is a valid theory,” Osler said.

Rama, however, said that most scientists agree with the theory of evolution, and that he believes the curriculum should focus on what the mainstream scientific community accepts.

“What you should teach is what is accepted by the scientific community,” Rama said.

As this same debate rages on in Tennessee, only time will tell what the future holds for science standards nationwide. Regardless of what happens, however, Ware said she recommends that students think for themselves and reach their own conclusions when assessing the material taught in school.

“Whether it’s evolution or Math or History, when students take the time to process and line up what they’re learning...with things they already know and their own experience, it leads to a more meaningful learning experience,” Ware said.

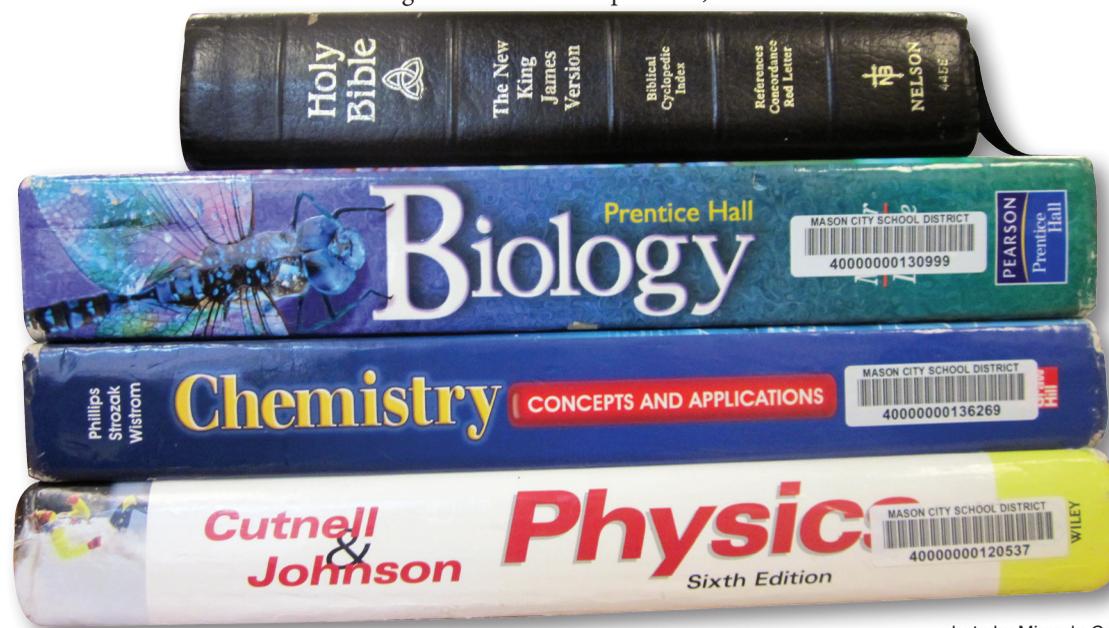


photo by Miranda Carney